

# JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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## EVANGELISM STRATEGY COMMISSION TO BEGIN WORK

A new general survey of basic strategy in the evangelization of Japan will soon be under way. The Study Commission on this subject under the auspices of the National Christian Council will meet on December 4 to reopen this important research. Five years ago the first report was published under the title "Japan Evangelism's Basic Policy".

"Why are we reviving this study?" queried the Rev. Mr. Kaname Tsukahara, associate general secretary of the NCC, and then proceeded to answer his question. In January, 1950, Dr. Charles Ransom of the International Missionary Council came to Japan from Bangkok at which time consultations on evangelism were sponsored by the NCC. It was decided then was the time for basic policy study. Work was continued for two years and the first report was published in 1953. "However, the social, cultural and church situation has changed since that time", continued Mr. Tsukahara, "and the report is therefore in some respects out-dated."

Also at that time the principles and theology of evangelism were not studied. The ecumenical movement is advancing and this, too, was not included in the past commission studies. The plan is to intensify and extend the boundaries of the coming research and the hope is that the report will be published in Japanese and English by the Spring of 1960.







Research will be carried on under five general topics; 1) Principle and Theology of Evangelism, or "What is Evangelism?"; 2) Present situation of the church as regards personnel, finances, organization, etc.; 3) Obstacles to evangelism (including the social and cultural situation, place of youth, women, family, students, rural folk, fishermen, etc.); 4) Special methods of evangelism such as literature, audio-visual, Christian schools, etc.; 5) Japanese culture and other religions and their relationship to Christianity, or "What attitude should we take toward culture and religions in Japan?"

The Commission is under the chairmanship of the Rev. Keikichi Shirai, new moderator of the United Church, and the committees to study the five topics are under the able leadership of pastors and outstanding laymen who have already been appointed. The leaders are listed here by the number of their general topics: 1. Dr. Kuwata, head of the Tokyo Theological Seminary; 2. Rev. Kikaku Shimamura, pastor of Fujimicho Church and head of the evangelism department of the United Church; 3. Rev. Takihiro Yamakita, pastor of Misakicho Church; Rev. Takeo Katsube, another United Church pastor; and 5. Prof. Yoshimitsu Endo, Episcopal Seminary (Seikokai Shingakuin).

#### DELEGATES TO GERMAN EVANGELICAL ACADEMIES REPORT

The German Evangelical Academies were the subject of discussion at a meeting of Protestant Christian leaders in the Tokyo area on Friday afternoon, November 21 at the YMCA in Surugadai. Reports were made by leaders who had just returned from an observation tour of the Academies in Germany, Switzerland and Holland. The meeting was sponsored by the Public Relations Division of the National Christian Council and heard reports from Mr. Motojiro Sugiyama, socialist party leader; Mrs. Moto Sakata, wife of the outstanding layman of the Kansai area; and the Rev. Mr. Ichiro Saito, pastor. Mr. Moto Sakata also made the European tour but was unable to attend the report meeting in Tokyo.

The Rev. Mr. Kiyoshi Hirai, General Secretary of the NCC, was the chairman of the meeting and the Rev. Mr. Michio Kozaki, President of the NCC also made a speech. Mr. Kozaki said that in viewing this new lay movement which has sprung up in Germany since the war, we must not assume that what works in Germany will necessarily work in Japan. "German Christianity and Japanese Christianity are very different. Religious freedom is really new here since the war. Actually, it is a miracle that the Church has grown as much as it has," he continued, "and not--'is this all we have grown in 100 years?'"

Mr. Sugiyama was the first to report on the European trip and spoke of busy days from August 27 when he left Japan until October 12 when he returned. He was able to observe six German Academies, three in Switzerland and one in Holland. "Entrance to the Academies is open to Protestant and Catholic, believers and non-believers", he said. "It is a lay movement and much time is given to Bible Study with question and answer discussions that last for hours. He reported having received a deep impression that "Christianity is still alive in Germany" even from observing the devotional way in which the Lord's prayer is prayed. There are 18 active Academies in Germany altogether, he said.







# ANGLICAN WORKERS MEET

A gathering of over 300 workers in the Seikokai, The Japan Province of the Anglican Communion, including nearly all members of the three orders of the ministry, evangelists and "key" laymen of the National Council of the Church, together with a large number of overseas missionary personnel, met at Kowakuen, Hakone, from Wednesday evening through Friday noon, November 12--14.

The main objectives of the meeting were to hear and discuss reports of the Lambeth Conference and of the Church's Central Committee for the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of its establishment in Japan.

The Ninth Lambeth Conference, convening early in July of this year in the restored Palace and Chapel of the Archbishop of Canterbury, saw over 300 bishops of the worldwide Anglican Communion "closeted" for six weeks with study tasks and the general goal of formulating some corporate expression of how they might best present "the gospel of Christ to a weary and frightened world." The keynote of their effort was set in the Archbishop's welcoming address as, "the reconciling task for which, as we believe, Christ has specially equipped us by the experiences of our spiritual and temporal history." The agenda of tasks included "The Authority and Message of the Bible", "Church Unity and the Church Universal", "Progress in the Anglican Communion", "The Reconciling of Conflicts Between and Within Nations", and "the Family in Modern Society." They were assisted in their work by the presence of representatives of the Old Catholic, Lutheran, Eastern Orthodox and Armenian Churches, indicating how this Conference, without claim to "exercise any powers of control or command" but rather to obtain an everdeeper apprehension of the truth, and to guard the fellowship with ever increasing apprehension of its value", is expanding in its relations with other communions and how seriously it considers the problem of unity.

The reports on Lambeth were presented to the Hakone gathering by the bishops attending from Japan, The Rt. Rev. Messers Yashiro, Presiding Bishop of the Seikokai, and Kurose, Ueda and Nosse, bishops of Mid-Japan, Hokkaido and South Tokyo. Mrs. Kurose, wife of the Bishop of Mid-Japan, also spoke of her impressions as a laywoman at Lambeth and of her subsequent travels which included a visit to America.

The second principal objective of the Hakone meeting was to hear and discuss plans for the Church's celebration of the 100th Anniversary year, especially the program for the main events of April. The Archbishop of Canterbury is expected here at that time. It was anticipated there would be helpful criticism and the meeting would gain the cooperation and arouse enthusiasm of the larger part of the Church's workers for carrying out the Anniversary plans.

The two-day agenda was so extensive and its ordering for discussion so complex a problem that the meeting was largely taken up with the presentation of reports. At the point of near "indigestion" from listening to reports and "supporting speeches", the younger clergy or postwar ordinands felt impelled to convene in separate session to consider how the meeting procedures might be arranged to provide more







atisfactory and productive participation of a greater number of those present. This incipient "rebellion" came about too late to bring any appreciable change in the direction of the meeting which ended with less meeting of minds and fruitful exchange of ideas than had been hoped.

The Friday morning session, at which the detailed report of the Central Committee for the Centenary was given, featured addresses by Bishop Okubo, Dr. Enkichi Kan and the Rev. Raymond Hammer. Each of these addresses presented a challenge to serious consideration of the present faith and order of the Church in Japan and raised the question of whether the appropriate approach of the Church to the Anniversary program might not be 'rather confessional and penitent, seeking the strength and means of that renewal it so badly needs.'

There was regret voiced by many that this "note", precisely wanted at the beginning of the meeting at Hakone, had not been sounded until the very end.

#### UNITED CHURCH CONDUCTS FILM EVANGELISM

The following are excerpts from a report by Rev. Kuyama, who has been directing a program of film evangelism for the Tokyo Conference of the United Church of Christ in Japan:

"Every autumn for the last five years the Tokyo conference has used AVACO films and AVACO--trained operators in film evangelism. The Tokyo Conference is divided into seven sub-divisions and we spent from seven to ten days in each area this Fall. We have used the films "Supreme Secret" and "Helen Keller", together with USIS films of general interest.

"Sometimes the pastor gives a five minute message after the film. Generally, however, in the case of the "Supreme Secret", for instance, the message is contained in the film, itself. This is by far the best. We want to get away from showing a film just to bring people out. We want to have a real film evangelistic meeting.

"Although only a handful will show up for a preaching meeting on Christianity, hundreds will come to see films. They feel free to enter the church, and even those casually passing by the church drop in. This is an important value of film evangelism. We averaged 80-100, often having two showings a day.

"Last year, we used the film "King of Kings" and several pastors said it was wonderful. We found that it was especially effective in bringing back to the church those who had drifted away. Moved by the story of Jesus' life and death, they returned to the church with new enthusiasm.

"Miyakejima is a small island of about five thousand population, with one tiny church on it. The pastor asked the Tokyo District's help in evangelizing the whole island. We made our way by the one bus which makes one trip a day all around the island, visiting the villages of about three hundred population each. This island is very strict in its feudalistic culture and traditional







religious faith. The people will not allow Christian preaching. However, they joyfully welcomed our films, even though they were Christian. We spent one to two days in each village. Now a second church is being started in the village where we had our best reception."

"The other day we went to the mountain village of Itsukaichi and showed the film, THE SUPREME SECRET. After the movie an old lady came up to me and said that she had never seen such a movie and was grateful to know what Christianity is really all about. She said that although she had been a Christian, she must set out now to really seek God anew. I was much impressed by the impact this film had on her."

#### LISTENERS RESPOND TO "SONGS OF THE HEART"

"Songs of the Heart" featuring the AVACO Chorus under the direction of Megumi Hara and short sermons by Mr. Shinjiro Noro, famous music critic and Christian layman, now is broadcast over three stations, including coverage of the two most populous areas of Japan: Tokyo and Kobe. Thus, it covers a potential listening audience of one-fourth of the population of Japan. Almost two hundred letters and cards are received from this program each week. Each correspondent is sent a small collection of Christian hymns and an introduction to the nearest church. Some comments from recent letters:

"After hearing your radio program I have been attending church regularly each Sunday. I have just started so I do not understand very well. Please tell me in detail about the church. And please send me one of the hymnbooks."

"Seven years ago I attended Sunday School and heard Christian preaching for a period of two years. But the teacher moved away and the school was closed. However, after I heard "Songs of the Heart" the other day, I felt I wanted Christian teaching again. Would you please send me some literature about Christianity?"

"Amidst the monotonous and busy routine of everyday life, I have come to feel very restless. I am seeking something, and this makes me interested in Christianity. However, I know nothing about Christianity, so I hesitate to do anything. But I do dare to write to you since listening to 'Songs of the Heart' on Saturday morning. I know that you are busy, but I shall be very happy if you could send me literature on Christianity, a hymnbook or anything. Also, please let me know the location of the church nearest my home."

"I had thought there was no church near my home. I was surprised to find that there was one within one hour walking distance. We farmers must work even on Sunday, so I can't attend church every Sunday. Is it all right if I can't go every week?"







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# INTERNATIONAL STUDY CONFERENCE ON CHILD WELFARE MEETS

An International Study Conference on Child Welfare was held at Tokyo's Sankei International Hall from the 23 to the 27 of November. The 520 delegates attending the conference exhibited an earnestness of purpose, an eagerness to learn, and a willingness to share seldom seen conventions. One hundred twenty of the delegates were leaders in child welfare from thirty-three foreign countries while the other 400 were busy welfare workers, doctors, teachers, judges, etc., from all the prefectures of Japan. Excellent interpreters and earphones nullified the usual handicaps in a bi-lingual meeting.

Even the weather-man joined forces with the Japanese people in their you-name-it-and-we-get-it hospitality. From the welcome greetings by Prince Takamatsu to the impromptu singing of Auld Lang Syne after the closing, the gathering was handled with push-button efficiency. The Children's Bureau and the Ministry of Health and Welfare, who were hosts to the conference, gave a get-acquainted reception. The Governor of Tokyo followed a day later with a party at the Kabuki Theater, serving supper between the plays to all the delegates. On the last evening of the Conference Prime Minister and Mrs. Kishi held a banquet at their official residence for the guests. Child welfare institutions of the city opened their doors for inspection and study and the children from the Yokohama School for the Blind demonstrated the overcoming of handicaps with their beautiful band music.

Speakers, too numerous to name, made helpful addresses on the many phases of the conference theme, "The Child in the Family." The main findings of the conference centered around meeting the needs of the child where he is, starting with the home, the school and the community. It was decided that welfare programs should start from the problem of the child and develop upward, using community volunteers directed by trained leaders, rather than top-heavy governmental plans and supervision. It was readily agreed that the place of a child was a home with a father and a mother--at least a mother. If he has been denied this basic right, then foster parents should be found. But if he must be put into an institution, then it should be a cottage plan institution resembling closely the normal home. The crippled child, the retarded child, and even the imbecile should find a place on the over-all program of child welfare, regardless of the economic condition of a country. In overcoming feelings of guilt and embarrassment among parents of deficient children, an organization of the parents of such children was found helpful. No sure cure for delinquency was discovered but that it had its roots in the home was generally conceded. Too severe, too little, or unfair discipline by the father, and inadequate mother-love were named as some of the probable causes of delinquency.







# CHRISTIAN HOME AND FAMILY SEMINAR MEETS

The Christian Home and Family Committee held a seminar at Ginza Church, Tokyo, on November 24-26, 1958. Rev. Shinji Iwamura gave six lectures in the mornings on the subject matter he studied at a Study and Training Institute on Marriage Guidance and Family Life Education for South East Asian Christian Leaders held at McGlvary Theological Seminary, Cheingmai, Thailand early this year. Two afternoon sessions were given to browsing and studying the books collected from various sources on the subjects discussed in his lectures. One evening hour members of Omori Megumi Church, Tokyo, under the leadership of Rev. B. Yamashita of Otaru, Hokkaido, performed the skit which appears in the Christian Education Journal for the women's meeting November program. This drama produced an interesting discussion on the family problems in a house-hold some of whose members spend too much time at church and others who spend no time.

The second evening films from Avaco on Christian home were shown. Reports from other areas were given from time to time during mealtime and evening meetings. The last afternoon session was spent in discussion and planning for the future of the Christian Home and Family Life work.

Rev. Shinji Iwamura had his material organized under seven points. These were 1.) History of Human Marriage and Family; 2.) Christian viewpoints on Sex, Love and Marriage; 3.) Pre-marital Preparation Guidance; 4.) Post-Marital Guidance; 5.) Counseling and Guidance; 6.) Christian Marriage; 7.) Church Programs for Home and Family. The desire was expressed to have his lectures published. There were sixty delegates, about a third of whom came from distant parts of Japan. Included among them were also young men and women who entered freely into the discussions.



